New Assassination Panel Is Blocked

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 11—Faced with growing objections to the proposed scope, budget and methods of the Select Committee on Assassinations, the leadership of the House leadership today withdrew from immediate consideration a resolution to re-establish the committee.

The decision, by Representative Jim Wright of Texas, the Democratic leader, came just before the House was scheduled to meet and after the Republican Conference agreed to oppose consideration of the resolution under procedures that sharply limit debate and require a two-thirds majority for approval.

Mr. Wright said he was not sure that the resolution would have passed if it had been brought up today but that the leadership would seek to re-establish the committee in two or three weeks under more time-consuming procedures that require only a simple majority for approval.

'Legitimate Concern'

In a related development, Representative Timothy E. Wirth, Democrat of Colorado, placed a statement in the record demanding to know how the committee chose its general counsel, Richard A. Sprague, and suggesting that he be required to make "a full financial disclosure to the select committee, if not to the House."

Mr. Wirth said that normally the selection of a committee staff should be left to the chairman and members of a committee, but because this particular panel was investigating the killings of President Kennedy and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the "selection of the committee's chief staffperson is a matter of legitimate concern to this body."

Representative Henry B. Gonzalez, the Texas Democrat who will probably be appointed the committee chairman if and when it is re-established, said he felt like "a guy who has been slugged before he has a chance to get into the ring and fight."

Mr. Gonzalez criticized an article in The New York Times on Jan. 2 about Mr. Sprague as "a journalistic vendetta dredged from the turgid and murky waters of big city politics" involving matters that he said occurred more than 10 years ago.

Article Cited Criticisms

The Times article cited a number of occasions, some as recent as 1973 and 1974, when official bodies such as the Pennsylvania Crime Commission, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and the Pennsylvania Attorney General criticized the actions and judgment of Mr. Sprague, who was for years the first assistant district attorney in Philadelphia.

A criticism of the select committee, voiced today during the House Republican Conference, concerned its scope of investigation. According to two members of the conference—Representatives Robert H. Michel of Illinois and Robert E. Bauman of Maryland—the proposed resolution re-establishing the committee would permit it to investigate far more than only the assassinations of President Kennedy and Dr. King.

"With the proposed mandate, that committee could begin a whole new investigation of the Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation," Mr. Michel said.